

the ISRC (International Standard Recording Code) as the discriminating information for discriminating the contents is read out at said storage step from the information recording medium and, if the ISRC is not stored in said information recording medium, data of the TOC (Table of Contents) is utilized as said discriminating information.

10. (Amended) The information processing method according to claim 2, further comprising:

a step of checking data in said terminal database; said checking step detecting possible modification using a hash function.

11. (Amended) The information processing method according to claim 2 wherein said duplicating step further includes a decision step of comparing the current temporal data to the temporal data of the memorized contents when the discriminating information of said contents acquired at said acquisition step is detected to have been memorized in the past in said storage step to verify whether or not a time period not less than a pre-set time has elapsed.

12. (Amended) The information processing method according to claim 11 wherein if, as a result of decision at said decision step, said pre-set time has not elapsed, duplication is prohibited.

13. (Amended) The information processing method according to claim 11 wherein if, as a result of decision at said decision step, said pre-set time has not elapsed, a watermark in said contents is detected and duplication processing is executed based on said watermark.

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-8 and 10-13 are presently active in this case. Claims 9 and 14 have been cancelled and Claims 1-8 and 10-13 have been amended by way of the present amendment.

In the outstanding Office Action, the title of the invention was objected to for not being descriptive; Claims 4-14 were objected to for including the term "added" in parentheses; Claims 1-3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for being indefinite; Claims 1-5, 9-12, and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,699,370 to Kaniwa et al.; and Claims 6-8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kaniwa et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,965,680 to Endoh.

In response to the objection to the title, the title has been rewritten to read "Information Processing Method and Apparatus and Program Storage Medium for Prohibiting Duplication of Contents In Large Quantities." No further objection on this basis is therefore anticipated.

In response to the objection of Claims 4-14, Claims 4-8 and 10-13 have been amended to remove the term "added." No further objection on this basis is therefore anticipated.

In response to the rejection of Claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, Claims 1-3 have been rewritten in order to address the deficiencies outlined in the Office Action. No further rejection on this basis is therefore anticipated.

Briefly recapitulating, the present invention provides an information processing apparatus and method for prohibiting duplication of contents of a recording medium in large quantities. To that end, the information processing apparatus includes storage means for storing a database including information for discriminating the contents duplicated in the past and temporal data as to the time of duplication of the contents in the past; acquisition means for acquiring the information for discriminating the contents to be duplicated; means for

deciding whether or not copying of the contents discriminated by the discriminating information is allowed; and duplication means for duplicating the contents in association with the discrimination information acquired by the acquisition means and the temporal data held in the storage means. The duplication of the contents is prohibited if the discriminating information has already been stored in the database and copying of the contents discriminated by the discriminating information has not been allowed.

As a consequence of the provision of a database including both discriminating information for discriminating contents duplicated in the past and temporal data as to the time of duplication of the contents in the past, it is possible to control copying of contents stored on a recording medium with high reliability. This is because the database can be updated with ease each time a copying step is performed without the need for storing data to the reproduced recording medium. Thus, even in the event where a conventional reproducing apparatus is used to reproduce an original disk during a duplication procedure, the duplication of the original disk can be reliably controlled based on the information stored in the database and duplication of the contents in large quantities can be substantially prohibited.

Page 3 of the Office Action asserts that Kaniwa et al. disclose storage means for storing the information for discriminating contents and the time information for the time the contents had been duplicated. Applicants' first point out that Claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the storage means stores a database including information for discriminating contents duplicated in the past and temporal data as to the time of duplication of the contents in the past. At best Kaniwa et al. disclose using data which is stored on the recording medium and which has to be duplicated in order to control duplication of the recording medium. Hence Applicants respectfully submit that the Kaniwa et al. patent neither teach or suggest the subject matter defined by Claim 1.

The Endoh patent fails to address the deficiencies of the Kaniwa et al. patent. Consequently, Kaniwa et al. is not believed to anticipate or render obvious the subject matter defined by Claim 1, when considered alone or in combination with Endoh.

Claims 2 and 3 are method and computer-readable program analogs of Claim 1. Claims 2 and 3 are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons that Claim 1 is believed to be allowable.

In light of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-3 are patentably distinguishable from the applied patents, and the dependent claims therefrom are also patentably distinguishable from the applied patents.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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IN THE TITLE

Please amend the title on page 1 to read as follows:

INFORMATION PROCESSING METHOD AND APPARATUS AND PROGRAM
STORAGE MEDIUM FOR PROHIBITING DUPLICATION OF CONTENTS IN LARGE
QUANTITIES [Information Processing Device and Method, and Program Storage Medium]

IN THE CLAIMS

--1. (Amended) An information processing apparatus comprising:

storage means for storing [the] a database including information for discriminating contents duplicated in the past and [the time information for the time the contents have been duplicated] temporal data as to the time of duplication of said contents in the past,

acquisition means for acquiring the information for discriminating contents to be duplicated; [and]

means for deciding whether or not copying of the contents discriminated by the discriminating information is allowed; and

duplication means for duplicating the contents in association with the discrimination information acquired by said acquisition means and the [time information] temporal data held in said storage means wherein duplication of said contents is prohibited if said discriminating information has already been stored in said database and copying of the contents discriminated by the discriminating information has not been allowed.

3. (Amended) An information processing method comprising:

a storage step for storing [the] information for discriminating contents duplicated in the past and [the time information for the time the contents have been duplicated] temporal data as to the time of duplication of said contents in the past;

an acquisition step for acquiring the information for discriminating contents to be duplicated; [and]

a decision step for deciding whether or not copying of the contents discriminated by the discriminating information is allowed; and

a duplication step for duplicating the contents in association with the discrimination information acquired by said acquisition step and the [time information] temporal data held [in] as a consequence of said storage step wherein duplication of said contents is prohibited if said discriminating information has already been stored in said database and copying of the contents discriminated by the discriminating information has not been allowed.

3. (Amended) A program storage medium having stored therein a computer-readable program, said program comprising:

a storage step for storing [the] information for discriminating contents duplicated in the past and [the time information for the time the contents have been duplicated] temporal data as to the time of duplication of said contents in the past;

an acquisition step for acquiring the information for discriminating contents to be duplicated; [and]

a decision step for deciding whether or not copying of the contents discriminated by the discriminating information is allowed; and

a duplication step for duplicating the contents in association with the discrimination information acquired by said acquisition step and the [time information] temporal data held [in] as a consequence of said storage step wherein duplication of said contents is prohibited if

said discriminating information has already been stored in said database and copying of the contents discriminated by the discriminating information has not been allowed.

4. (Amended) [(added)] The information processing method according to claim 2 wherein

said contents are reproduced from an information storage medium.

9. (Amended) [(added)] The information processing method according to claim 4 wherein

said information recording medium is a compact disc memorizing the music information.

10. (Amended) [(added)] The information processing method according to claim 2 wherein

the discriminating information for discriminating the contents is the ISRC (International Standard Recording Code).

11. (Amended) [(added)] The information processing method according to claim 2 wherein

the discriminating information for discriminating the contents is the TOC (Table of Contents).

12. (Amended) [(added)] The information processing method according to claim 2 wherein

the ISRC (International Standard Recording Code) as the discriminating information for discriminating the contents is read out at said storage step from the information recording medium and, if the ISRC is not stored in said information recording medium, data of the TOC (Table of Contents) is utilized as said discriminating information.

10. (Amended) [(added)] The information processing method according to claim [9] 2, further comprising:

a step of checking data in said terminal database; said checking step detecting possible modification using a hash function.

11. (Amended) [(added)] The information processing method according to claim 2 wherein said duplicating step further includes a decision step of comparing the current temporal [information] data to the temporal [information] data of the memorized contents when the discriminating information of said contents acquired at said acquisition step is detected to have been memorized in the past in said storage step to verify whether or not a time period not less than a pre-set time has elapsed.

12. (Amended) [(added)] The information processing method according to claim 11 wherein
if, as a result of decision at said decision step, said pre-set time has not elapsed, duplication is prohibited.

13. (Amended) [(added)] The information processing method according to claim 11 wherein
if, as a result of decision at said decision step, said pre-set time has not elapsed, a watermark in said contents is detected and duplication processing is executed based on said watermark.--